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Letter dated 18 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Acting on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to the Security Council Rwanda's reactions concerning the attitude of the Kinshasa Government to the Sun City Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the statement by the Rwandan Government (see annex) concerning France's accusations in the Security Council regarding the Muliro attack.

1. The truth about Muliro

The Kinshasa Government seized Muliro, a former military position of RCD-Goma, in total violation of the Lusaka Peace Agreement. The advance of the Congolese Armed Forces beyond Muliro to the town of Kamamba which they wanted to take from RCD cost them Muliro which was taken back by RCD whom the Kinshasa Government wanted to dislodge from Kamamba, the first town after Muliro. That is what happened.

2. Kinshasa is deliberately mixing up RCD and APR

RCD is the main Congolese opposition, both from the military standpoint and from the political standpoint, to the Kinshasa Government.

Given this military and political strike force, the Kinshasa Government is constantly targeting RCD-Goma, which it does not call by its proper name and which it has taken to mixing up with APR. This deliberate confusion seeks to play down the importance of the largest Congolese opposition force and thus systematically deny the panoply of profound reasons which prompted the Congolese of RCD-Goma to take up arms against Kinshasa.

3. Kinshasa is sabotaging the Inter-Congolese Dialogue

The Kinshasa Government is sabotaging the Inter-Congolese Dialogue of Sun City (South Africa) as it did the one at Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). In both cases, the Kinshasa delegation left the meeting room for reasons that do not make sense.

Anyone who has been following the position of the Kinshasa Government on this matter knows that Kinshasa's attempts to impose Joseph Kabila on the other Congolese forces as president of the transition have failed dismally. It is this failure that haunts the Kinshasa Government and makes it believe, rightly or wrongly, that

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it was leaving as a loser in this political battle regarding the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Whence the slamming of the door in Sun City.

4. Rwanda firmly supports the Inter-Congolese Dialogue

The fundamental Congolese problem is political. There are many Congolese political issues for which adequate political solutions must be found. That is why the Inter-Congolese Dialogue is so important and why it is so important that it should be a success; we earnestly hope that it will be.

Even prior to Sun City, the Kinshasa Government stated that there would be no Inter-Congolese Dialogue as long as Rwanda remained in the Congo. This statement goes against the Lusaka Agreement, all of whose clauses must be implemented, including the ones negotiating the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, the disarmament and disengagement of the negative forces, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I should like to request that this letter and the statement by my Government, annexed hereto, be circulated to the Member States of the United Nations as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dr. Anastase **Gasana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 18 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Statement of 15 March 2002 of the Government of Rwanda on accusations by France

1. The Government of Rwanda is dismayed by the accusations levelled by France at the Security Council to the effect that Rwanda would have sent troops into the Democratic Republic of the Congo in violation of our commitment to the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

2. It is all the more surprising because France is well aware that a United Nations observer mission, MONUC, charged with the responsibility of monitoring and verification of such incidents is already deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUC should investigate the incident and inform all the concerned parties before such accusations are made. So far MONUC has not communicated to us about the alleged troop movements.

3. France is also aware that the fighting in Muliro, Kamamba, Pepa, Zongwe and Nyange is all in territory controlled by the RCD. So it can only be the Democratic Republic of the Congo government forces which have launched an offensive in flagrant violation of the ceasefire, and the disengagement protocols of the Lusaka Agreement.

4. It should also be recalled that the Political Committee has since September 2001 asked the Democratic Republic of the Congo government forces to vacate all illegally occupied positions to no avail. At its last meeting in Luanda, in February 2002, the Political Committee reiterated the appeal. The Democratic Republic of the Congo government response was to launch new offensives which have resulted in the present situation.

5. It would seem that President Kabila has failed to establish his legitimacy within and outside Sun City with his compatriots and he has chosen to torpedo the Inter-Congolese Dialogue by waging war. The correct thing for France to do is to discourage him from such a dangerous course. It is to encourage President Kabila to accept the only viable basis for resolving the Congo crisis, that is to full cooperate in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. France and the Security Council have so far not condemned these bellicose acts.

6. France's accusations are not helpful to the process at all.

7. The Rwanda Government reiterates its assurances to our partners that its forces have not participated in the current fighting in the Muliro area, it has not sent any fresh forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as claimed by France, and has no intention of doing so.

8. The Government, in addition appeals to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to return to its defensive positions as agreed through the Kampala Disengagement Plans and Harare Sub-plans. Walking out of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo risks to jeopardize the peace process.